

SEVERALL GROUNDS, REASONS, ARGUMENTS,
AND
PROPOSITIONS,
Offered to the Kings Most Excellent
MAJESTY,

For the Improvement of His Revenue in the *First-Fruits*, and *Tenths* :
Annexed to the Petition of *James*, Earl of *North-hampton*, *Leicester*, Viscount *Hereford*, Sir *William Farmer*, Baronet, *George Carew*, Esq; and
the rest of the Petitioners for a Patent of the *First-Fruits* and *Tenths*, for the Term of one and thirty Years, at the yearly Rent of
Threescore Thousand Pounds.

THAT whereas in the 26th. Year of King Henry the Eighth, The Lords Spiritual, Temporal, and Commons Assembled in Parliament, with His Royal Assent, did Ordain, and Enact, That the King's Highness, His Heirs, and Successors, Kings of this Realm, should have and enjoy for ever, the first Fruits, and Tenths for one year, of every Person, and Persons, which should be Promoted, Elected, Presented, or by any other Ways, or Means appointed, to have any Arch-Bishoprick, Bishoprick, Deanry, Prebendary, Parsonage, Vicarage, or other Dignity, or Spiritual Promotion whatsoever within this Realm, of what Name, Nature, or Quality soever they be, or to whose Patronages, or Gifts soever they belong, the first Fruits, Revenues, or Profits, for one year of every such Dignity, Benefice, or Spiritual Promotion, whereunto any such Person or Persons, shall be Promoted, Presented, Elected, or Appointed; And that every such Person or Persons, before any Actual and Real Possession, or meddling with the Profits of any such Dignity, Benefice, Office, or Promotion Spiritual, should satisfy, content, and pay, or agree to pay to the Kings Use, at reasonable Dates and Times, upon good Sureties, the first Fruits and Profits for one whole year, to the Kings Treasury. And it was Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, that the Lord Chancellor of England, and Master of the Rolls, for the Time being, and from time to time, at their Will and Pleasure, should name and deputate by Commission, or Commissions, under the great Seal, fit Persons to examine and search for the just and true Values of the first Fruits, and Profits, by all ways and means that they can, and to compound and agree for the Rate of the said first Fruits and Profits, and to limit days of Payment upon good Security, which should be in the Nature of a Statute Staple.

AN D whereas it was Ordained and Enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the Kings Majesty, His Heirs, and Successors, Kings of this Realm, shall yearly have, take, enjoy, and receive, united, and knit to the Imperial Crown for ever, one yearly Rent or Pension, amounting to the Tenth Part of all the Revenues, Rents, Farms, Tythes, Offerings, Emoluments, and of all other Profits, as well called Spiritual as Temporal, now appertaining, or belonging, or hereafter that shall belong to any Arch-Bishop, or Bishop, Dean, Prebend, Parson, Vicar, or other Benefice, Spiritual Dignity, or Promotion whatsoever, within any Dioceses of England or Wales, and that the said yearly Pension, Tenth, or Annual Rent, shall be yearly paid to the Kings Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, Kings of this Realm for ever, which was confirmed by several Acts of Parliament, in 32 Hen. 8. and 34 H. 8. and 37 H. 8. and 2 Edw. 6. and 7 Edw. 6. and the 1 Eliz. And it was also further Enacted and Ordained by the said Authorities, That the said yearly Rent, Pension, or Tenth Part, shall be Taxed, Rated, Levied, Received, and Paid to the Kings Use, in Manner and Form following, that is to say; The Lord Chancellor of England, for the Time being, shall have Power and Authority to direct into every Dioceses in England, and Wales, several Commissions in the Kings Name, under His Great Seal, to such Person or Persons, as the Kings Highness shall name and appoint, Commanding, or Authorizing the Commissioners, or Three of them at least, to Examine, Search, and Enquire, by all the Ways and Means that they can, by their Discretions, of, and for the true, just, and whole Intire yearly Values, of all the Pannours, Lands, Tenements, Rents, Tythes, Offerings, Emoluments, and Hereditaments, and all other Profits whatsoever, as well Spiritual as Temporal, appertaining to any such Dignity, or Spiritual Promotions as aforesaid, ordinary Deductions to be defalked out of the same. And that the several Bishops should be charged with the Collection of the said first Fruits and Tenths, in their several and respective Dioceses. And that upon the Bishops Certificate any Incumbent, refusing to pay his Tenths, shall be discharged of his Living.

By the Gods Advice, and Consultations of all Estates in so many Parliaments, the first Fruits and Tenths were granted and confirmed to the Crown of England, for the better Maintenance, and Support of the Royal State. And if the People are since multiplied, whereby there is a further increase of Rents and Tythes, and a greater Value upon all Commodities, the Crown Revenue should be Improved towards the Kings innumerable Charges for the Government, and well-being of those People, and holding a Correspondence with all Foreign Princes, for their Trade and commerce. As lately the Spanish Trade was refused at the Kings Charge.

Kings, and Queens of England, gave most of the Lands, Tenements and Hereditaments belonging to these Ecclesiastical Dignities and Promotions, and have also Created others Foundations, Colleges, and Houses of Learning, and given Large Inheritances, and Endowments thereunto, whereby most of the Clergy have their Educations, and are made fit for these Dignities, and other Ministerial Offices in the Church, without any great Charge to their Families, or Relations, therefore good Reason the first Fruits and Tenths of all their Dignities and Benefices, should be paid to the King, whom they hold of, as Patron Paramount, and as Supreme Head of the Church, and Defender of the faith of England.

The Statutes, and established Laws of the Land, are made for the full Payment, and whole Intire first Fruits and Tenths, wherein the Clergy themselves had their Votes in Parliaments. And it is as great Injustice for the Clergy to withhold any part of the Kings Dues, as others to deny them any Part of their Prebend, Personal, or Spiritual Tythes, the Subject in general suffers, wherein the Kings Revenue is abated, which of Right belongs to the Crown. Every private person may, as often as he pleases, improve his own Revenue, when occasion serves.

The People's Subject is allowed the Benefit of the Law, and the King does him Justice, and maintains his Property, according to the Common and positive Laws of the Land. The King may expect the same Benefit of the Laws, and require his own Rights, and Revenues, by those Rules of Justice, which all men are bound to observe and obey.

Three Objections raised against Payment, of First-Fruits and Tenths, Answered by the Petitioners.

Obj. 1. That the first-Fruits and Tenths, is an Innovation obtruded upon the Clergy of late Times.

Answ. To this they answer, That the first Fruits and Tenths, were paid in the Saxons Time, as appears by the Ecclesiastical History, and have so continued ever since in England, to this very day, and that those Payments of Tributes, Bids calls Vectigal, which signifies a Badge of Subordination of the Clergy to the supreme Civil Magistrate, and where they have cast off this Tribute, the Civil Magistracy hath been subordinate to the Authority of the Church.

Obj. 2. That the first-Fruits and Tenths, are of a Popish Institution.

Answ. It may be satisfactory enough, that this Tribute of first Fruits and Tenths, have been paid to all Kings and Queens of England, since the Reformation in Henry the Eighth's Time, without any Repeal of any of the said Statutes: but in the Time of Popery, (viz.) in the 2. and 3. of Philip and Marie, The Act for paying of first Fruits and Tenths was repealed, but confirmed again in the very first year of Queen Elizabeths Reformation of Religion from Popery, by the Statute of the 1. Eliz. chap. 4. With a Recital and Ratification of all former Statutes, that confirmed the same to the Crown, and have continued in Force ever since: So that if the Tythes be Jure Divino, payable to the Clergy for their Administration of the Word and Sacraments to the People, the first Fruits and Tenths Jure Politico are payable to the King, their Sovereign Lord, for His Administration of Justice, and maintenance of the Rights, Privileges, and Liberties, both of Church and State.

Obj. 3. That the Clergy of all Orders and Degrees, have lately suffered, and therefore ought not to be raised in their first Fruits and Tenths.

Answ. That the King hath suffered more, and His Revenue much diminished by the late detestable and irreligious War, which hath been fomented, and encouraged by many thousands of the Clergy, now confirmed in their Livings by Act of Parliament, and the Commons of England would willingly pay their Tythes, if they were sensible the first Fruits, and full Tenths were to be paid to the King, as they lately expelled in their desires upon the like occasion of improving that part of the Kings Revenue.

The Incumbents have, and do daily take Advantages for their Tythes, of new Village, and other Improvements of Land, which ought to be proportionably answered to the King. The Bishops, and all other Persons in Spiritual Dignities and Promotions, may raise a full Tenth Part to be paid by their Tenants, who offers now to advance so much besides the old reserved Rents, and also to repair the Ruins of their Cathedral Churches.

Six Proposals to the King.

1. That the said Petitioners will discharge the said Debt of fifty thousand pounds due from the Crown, as mentioned in their Petition, and give good Security for the payment of fifty thousand pounds yearly Rent unto His Majesty, His Heirs or Successors, Kings of England, during the said Term of one and thirty years, without any Defalcation, other charges, or reprisal whatsoever.
2. That the Petitioners will not take any first Fruits or Tenths, of such Benefice or Living, which is appropriated to the Cure of Souls, that upon due Examination and Enquiry, shall not be indifferently found and returned at the full yearly Value of thirty pounds upon the Surber.
3. That no Hospital, Colledge, or Scholl shall pay any first Fruits or Tenths.
4. That the Bishop shall not be troubled with the care or charge of Collection of first Fruits or Tenths, within his Dioceses: but be wholly busied in the other Spiritual Affairs of the Church, and Cure of Souls.
5. That all Ministers who were settled in Livings, before the 29th. of May 1660. and have already compounded for their first Fruits, shall be discharged accordingly.

6. That the Petitioners will prepare a Bill that the said Patent for one and thirty years may be confirmed by Parliament, (with His Majesties Concurrence) to the Petitioners; containing such Covenants, Clauses, Provisions, Conditions, and Agreements, as the Attorney General, and the rest of His Majesties Council, Learned in the Law shall reasonably Advice and direct, whereby all legal Power and Authority may be granted, and confirmed to the Petitioners, to Tax, Levie, and Receive the said first Fruits and Tenths, in as large and ample a manner, as by the said Laws and Statutes, the same were granted to the Kings and Queens of England, as aforesaid.

Three Proposals offered to the Clergy.

1. That upon the Promotion, Appointment, Election, or Presentation of any Spiritual person, into the said Dignities, Benefices, or Promotions, and before they enter into the Actual possession thereof, they shall be bound in a Recognizance, in the Nature of a Statute Staple, with two sufficient Sureties to pay the first Fruits, according to the full value, as shall be returned upon a Surber, payable within four years, after such Promotion, Election, presentation, or Entrance, at eight severall payments, by equal portions every six Months, and that one years Tenths of every such Dignity, Benefice, or promotion, shall be deducted out of the said first Fruits.
2. That whereas by the Liberty and Disorder of the late departed Times, the Clergy were not held in such Reverence and Esteem by the Common People, as the Dignity of their Calling requires. And they have been forced to commence federal Actions for their Tythes, and by reason of Contentions and disaffected Spirits, the Preaching of the Word of God, hath been unprofitable to the people, that have taken advantage against the Ministry. Therefore a short Bill shall be prepared by Counsel, and offered to the Parliament, that an Act may be passed for the speedy Recovering of Tythes, and that the two next Justices of the peace adjacent to the place, may have power upon Complaint of any Minister, or other person to whom the Tythes do, or shall belong, to issue their Warrants to distrain the Goods and Chattels of any person or persons refusing to pay their Tythes to whom they shall become due and payable as aforesaid. That Love and Unity may be preferred between Ministers and their Congregations.
3. That it shall be proposed to His Majesty, that forthwith Commissions may be issued out in His Majesties Name throughout England and Wales, to examine and find out the full Values of all Dignities, Benefices, Parsonages, and other Spiritual Promotions aforesaid to return the Surbers thereof, with the Names of the Patrons, and present Incumbents, (and in the mean time to suspend all proceedings in the first Fruits Office) And that His Majesty would be pleased to appoint Thomas Coleman to be Secretary for Promotions, (of all such Livings as shall be in His Majesties Dispose) who is a fit person for that Employment, and will wholly intend His Majesties Service therein: To the end, that His Majesty may be fully informed of the true Value of those Livings, that shall qualify persons may be preferred, answerable to such promotions. And whereas for the Ease of His Majesty, His Heirs and Successors, the said Commissions shall be directed to the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keepers Dispose, to be so continued, notwithstanding any new Return of a greater value. Further Arguments will be given by the Petitioners, in convenient Time, conducing both to the Advantage of the King, and the Benefit of the Clergy as occasion requires. All which is humbly submitted to the Considerations of His Majesty, the Lord Chancellor, Lord High Treasurer, and Lord Chief Baron, &c.